

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-8, and 11 are cancelled and claims 9, 12, 17 and 18 are amended. Claims 9, 12, 17, and 18 are all the claims currently pending in this Application.

Claims 9 and 18 stand objected to due to informalities. Applicants submit that the current amendments to claims 9 and 18 address those informalities and respectfully request that the objections to these claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Regarding the claim amendments, Applicants submit that amended claims 9 and 12 are supported in the originally-filed application at least by Figure 15B. Applicants submit that the amendments to claims 17 and 18 are supported at least by Figure 4 and Figure 15A.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Oikawa (U.S. Patent 6,371,609) in view of Tajika (U.S. Patent 6,120,141). Claim 9 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Oikawa in view of Shibata (U.S. Patent 6,779,865). Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Oikawa in view of Kitakami (U.S. Patent 6,601,945) and Tajika. Claim 12 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Oikawa in view of Kitakami and Shibata. Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Oikawa in view of Kanda (U.S. Patent 6,471,322). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Regarding claims 9 and 12, Applicants submit that none of the cited references teaches or suggests “wherein the first nozzle row and the second nozzle row are misaligned with each other in a sub-scanning direction by a fixed distance in such a manner that the nozzles making up the first nozzle row are misaligned, respectively, in the sub-scanning direction with the nozzles

making up the second nozzle row by the fixed distance.” Additionally, no reasonable combination of the cited references would have suggested this limitation to one of skill in the art at the time of the invention.

Regarding claims 17 and 18, Applicants submit that none of the cited references teaches or suggests “a second nozzle row for ejecting ink not having color material nor black material.” Additionally, no reasonable combination of the cited references would have suggested this limitation to one of skill in the art at the time of the invention.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 9, 12, 17, and 18 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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